

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5**

DATE: September 19, 2007

SUBJECT: Reports of Significant Developments and Activities
Ending on September 7, 2007

FROM: Richard C. Karl, Director
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TO: Mary A. Gade
Regional Administrator

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The activities listed below are organized by site-specific activities, other significant developments, and training/conferences:

SITE-SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Emergency Response, Wixom Nitric Acid Release, Wixom, Michigan

On August 28, 2007, a nitric acid spill occurred at the Tronex Chemical Company located in Wixom, Michigan. The spill occurred when an operator knocked the valve off the bottom of a 70 percent nitric acid tank. The entire contents (quantity unknown) of the tank were released, with all of the nitric acid spilling out of the secondary containment, throughout the building, into the adjacent parking lot, and into a nearby sanitary sewer. Oakland County HazMat requested the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA's) assistance when they discovered that the magnitude of the spill was much larger than initially reported. Three U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) Jeff Kimble, Brian Schlieger, and Michelle Jaster, along with the Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) contractor, mobilized to the site to assist the local responders with air monitoring and oversight of cleanup contractor activities. Oversight of emergency response cleanup efforts continued and was completed on September 1, 2007. Tronex funded

cleanup efforts. U.S. EPA is assisting City and State officials with longer term actions at the site.

Contacts: Michelle Jaster (734-692-7683)
 Jeff Kimble (734-692-7688)
 Brian Schlieger (734-692-7681)

Emergency Response, Oak Harbor Fish Kill, Oak Harbor, Ohio

On August 22, 2007, a tanker truck owned by Sweeteners Plus, Inc. (SPI) ran off State Route 2 near Oak Harbor, Ohio, causing approximately 4,300 gallons of corn syrup to spill onto the ground and into the adjacent ditches and catch basins. These catch basins lead to Crane Creek and subsequently into Lake Erie. Crane Creek runs through the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. The corn syrup was fermenting/decomposing, causing the water to become anoxic and in turn, killing aquatic life. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) requested U.S. EPA assistance in discussions with SPI regarding appropriate and complete cleanup efforts. On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Brian Schlieger mobilized to the site on August 27, 2007, to assess the situation, participate in discussions with SPI, and oversee response actions. Cleanup efforts were completed on August 31, 2007. Ohio EPA will continue to monitor the Creek for any potential long-term effects.

Contact: Brian Schlieger (734-692-7681)

Emergency Response, Findlay Flood Emergency Response, Findlay, Ohio

During the week of August 20, 2007, a major rain event and subsequent flooding occurred in the City of Findlay, Hancock County, Ohio. On August 23, 2007, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) requested U.S. EPA assistance in assessing and conducting a removal action at several buildings that were affected by the flood. Upon arrival, U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinator Jon Gulch observed that several hundred gallons of waste motor oil were leaking from the doors and windows of a business. After the issuing of a Notice of Federal Interest, the responsible party would not adequately address the release. Therefore, a Notice of Federal Assumption was issued and U.S. EPA performed the response to remove the threat of release of oil to the Blanchard River. U.S. EPA mobilized the Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) and Emergency and Rapid

Removal Service (ERRS) contractors. Upon arrival, a site reconnaissance was performed and containment/absorbent booms were placed in a creek to stop migration of oil to the Blanchard River.

During the response, a heavy sheen was observed flowing in Eagle Creek. It was determined that this unrelated oil spill was originating from a vehicle oil change facility that could not account for new or used motor oil inventory. U.S. EPA responded and cleanups at both sites were completed in 6 days.

Contact: Jon Gulch (734-692-7686)

Emergency Response, Ottawa Flood Emergency Response, Ottawa, Ohio

On August 26, 2007, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) requested assistance from U.S. EPA in evaluating and responding to an unknown oil spill in Ottawa, Putnam County, Ohio. Ohio EPA had been monitoring a minor oil spill for several days; however, due to extensive flooding in the City of Ottawa, the extent of oil contamination at this location was not seen until the flood waters lowered. Upon arrival, U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinator Jon Gulch determined that there was a large amount of oil in Tawa Run Creek and the subsequent flood waters that were trapped in the large (approximately 900 by 400 foot) floodplain. U.S. EPA immediately mobilized the Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team and Emergency and Rapid Removal Service contractors. Upon arrival, a site reconnaissance was performed and absorbent booms were placed in the heavily affected areas to stop migration and further contamination of trees, brush, debris, and soil (as the flood waters receded). The site cleanup was completed in 6 days.

Contact: Jon Gulch (734-692-7686)

Consent Decree Lodged, Himco Dump Superfund Site, Elkhart, Indiana

On September 7, 2007, the Department of Justice (DOJ), on behalf of U.S. EPA (EPA), lodged a consent decree (CD) in the Northern District Court of Indiana concerning the Himco Dump Superfund site in Elkhart, Indiana. A civil complaint was concurrently filed by DOJ, in accordance with Sections 106 and 107 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The CD requires the potentially responsible parties for the site to implement the selected remedy prescribed

in the Record of Decision (ROD) Amendment issued by U.S. EPA on September 15, 2004. The CD also will recover unreimbursed costs incurred by the United States for response actions at the site. Following lodging of the CD, the State of Indiana filed a motion to intervene as co-plaintiff to recover the State's costs incurred at the site. A notice in the Federal Register will be placed by DOJ, announcing a 30-day comment period, in accordance with Section 122(d)(2) of CERCLA.

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Removal Assessment, Lane Street Groundwater Contamination Site, Elkhart, Indiana

On August 5, 2007, the U.S. EPA On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Ken Theisen, Emergency Response Section III, conducted a residential well sampling at the Lane Street Groundwater Contamination site located in Elkhart, Indiana. The assessment was in response to an Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) request concerning well contamination from the chemical trichlorethylene (TCE). A total of 8 samples were collected and will be run for a variety of VOCs (volatile organic compounds) and the results will be compared to samples collected by IDEM in the same area. If a health threat exists, the Emergency Response Section will consider an emergency action.

Contact: Ken Theisen (312-886-1959)

RMP Inspection, Hydrite Chemical, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On August 14, 2007, Bob Mayhugh of the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Section (CEPPS) performed a Risk Management Program (RMP) inspection at Hydrite Chemical in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The purpose of the inspection was to determine if Hydrite was in compliance with the various requirements of the Risk Management Program. Hydrite Chemical in Milwaukee has two chemicals on site that meet the reporting thresholds under the RMP regulations. They are sulfur dioxide and chlorine. These chemicals are warehoused at this facility and are used at other Hydrite facilities or by clients. The information gathered during the inspection will be evaluated to determine the facility's compliance with the RMP rule.

Contact: Bob Mayhugh (312-886-5929)

RMP Inspection, Hercules Incorporated, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On August 15, 2007, Bob Mayhugh of the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Section (CEPPS) performed a Risk Management Program (RMP) inspection at Hercules Incorporated in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The purpose of this inspection was to confirm compliance with requirements with RMP regulations. Hercules Incorporated manufactures chemical additives to be used with the pulp and paper industry. They have epichlorohydrin which meets the reporting requirements of the RMP. The information gathered during the inspection will be evaluated to determine the facility's compliance with the RMP rule.

Contact: Rob Mayhugh (312-886-5929)

RMP Inspection, Emmepak Foods, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On August 16, 2007, Bob Mayhugh of the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Section (CEPPS) performed a Risk Management Program (RMP) inspection at Emmepak Foods, a division of Cargill Inc., in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The purpose of the inspection was to confirm compliance with the requirements set out by the RMP regulations. Emmepak Foods is a beef processing facility. It has anhydrous ammonia on site for its refrigeration system. The quantity of ammonia that the facility has on site meets the reporting threshold of the RMP regulation. The information gathered during the inspection will be evaluated to determine the facility's compliance with the RMP rule.

Contact: Bob Mayhugh (312-886-5929)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS**Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Grant Close Out**

The Brownfields Program, in the Revitalization, Documents, and Agreements Branch, has completed work under the revolving loan grant with the State of Indiana awarded in 1997. The memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed on August 23, 2007, closed out the \$1,000,000 award. The funds, used to capitalize a loan program administered by the State of Indiana provided funds needed for environmental cleanup to reuse a landfill for public greenspace

and nature preserve. The loan to the City of South Bend in Indiana, signed June 2003, will be paid back to the State of Indiana within 8 years. Per the terms of the MOA, the State of Indiana will transfer current program income to the U.S. EPA to establish a new replacement transition cooperative agreement for revolving loan. Future program income will be used to establish an Environmental Assessment Program. The MOA is the first close out executed in Region 5 under a new policy signed February 14, 2007.

Contact: Deborah Orr (312-886-7576)

TRAINING/CONFERENCES

Site Tour, Students from the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, H.O.D. Landfill Superfund Site, Lake County, Illinois

On September 6, 2007, two students from the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies were given a tour of the Gas to Energy system and recreational facilities at the H.O.D. Landfill Superfund site. The Arava Institute is the premier environmental teaching and research program in the Middle East and prepares Arab and Jewish leaders to cooperatively solve the region's environmental challenges. After a presentation about Region 5's Superfund Redevelopment Program, Sawsan Issa and Roni Biller observed the Gas to Energy system in operation and ongoing landscaping activities at the H.O.D. Landfill in Antioch, Illinois. The Gas to Energy system was supplying heat and electricity to the 262,000 square foot Antioch Public High School. The students learned how by operating the Gas to Energy system, an annual reduction in greenhouse gas equivalent to removing 3400 autos from the road or planting 4570 acres of trees is achieved. The students also noted landscaping and light installation activities at the recreational complex on the landfill. At the time of our visit, 12 tennis courts, two practice soccer fields, two practice baseball fields, one tournament-level baseball field, one tournament-level soccer field, and concession, restroom, and parking facilities were in place.

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